The Prayers of Jesus

Lionel Hartley

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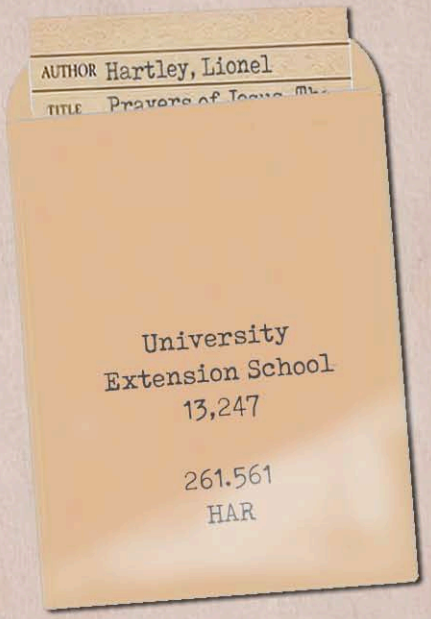
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Acknowledgement

The Christchurch branch of the *Child Evangelism Fellowship* wishes to acknowledge the contribution of Lionel Hartley, currently a teenage speaker and musician at our Child Evangelism Fellowship rallies, leading the singing and playing our choruses on his piano accordion.

Although he was also officially invited to sing as a boy soprano at the 1959 Billy Graham Crusade in Lancaster Park, he declined without giving a reason, so we are particularly grateful that he considers the Child Evangelism Fellowship worthy of his God-given talents.

He has been preaching in our local Baptist, Methodist,

Presbyterian and Anglican churches for about ten years (since he was a child).

He has been illustrating children's stories for our Good News Club lessons for the past three years, and as an already published author he was commissioned to write this booklet following a sermon series on the same topic.

The Child Evangelism Fellowship is grateful that he chose to accept no payment nor commission fee and assigned all royalties or other monetary benefits to the local chapter of the Child Evangelism Fellowship.

We are proud to sponsor the publication of this booklet to add to our library of non-

denominational literature for sharing, particularly for the parents of the children.

Reverend Gordon Coombs,
Opawa Baptist Church,
Christchurch,
January 1970

Introduction

Prayer was central to the life and ministry of Jesus Christ.

The Gospels reveal that Jesus also prayed at every major turning point of His earthly ministry.

His prayers demonstrate His relationship with the Father, His dependence upon God, His compassion for humanity, His submission to the Father's will, and His intercession for believers.

The New Testament records a number of distinct occasions when Jesus prayed, although it also states that He prayed frequently beyond those recorded events (see Luke 5:16; Mark 1:35).

This booklet examines each recorded prayer or occasion of prayer in chronological order, exploring its context, meaning, and application.

Each section also includes a possible lesson for you and me.

Chapter I. Jesus Prayed at His Baptism

"The life of Jesus was absolutely sinless. If He were not sinless, then we have no Gospel. All the value of His dying depends upon the virtue of His living. Why, then did the Sinless submit to a baptism of repentance? . . . When this Man came to him, One among a crowd, so like them that the crowd did not distinguish Him, there was yet a difference. . .

The supreme element in the baptism of Jesus was the identification of the Sinless with the sinner. He who had no sin to repent of, took His place among those who had sin to repent of. He who was sinless, went down into the baptism

that was the portion of the sinner. . . . He submitted to the baptism of John, indicating by this symbolic action his identification of Himself with His people in their sin, in order that He may put that sin away. . ." (G. Campbell Morgan, The Gospel of Matthew, Old Tappan: Fleming H. Revell, Co., 1929, p. 25-6).

Immediately after His baptism by John, Jesus prayed.

Scripture References

(Matthew 3:13-17) "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. *14]* But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? *15]* And Jesus

answering said unto him, Suffer *it to be so* now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. *16]* And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: *17]* And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

(Mark 1:9-11) "And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. *10]* And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the

Spirit like a dove descending upon him: *11]* And there came a voice from heaven, *saying,* Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

(Luke 3:21-22) "Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened, *22]* And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased."

(Luke 3:21–22 specifically mentions Jesus praying)

The significance to us is that it was at the beginning of Jesus'

public ministry, Heaven opened, the Holy Spirit descended and Jesus received the Father's affirmation, "You are my beloved Son".

The lesson for us is that prayer invites communion with God at new beginnings.

Chapter II. Jesus Withdrew to Pray After Ministry

(Matthew 14:23) "And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone."

(Luke 22:39-42) "And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him. *40]* And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation. *41]* And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, *42]* Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless

not my will, but thine, be done."

Following intense healing and preaching ministry, Jesus sought solitude.

Scripture References

(Mark 1:35) "And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed."

(Luke 4:42) "And when it was day, he departed and went into a desert place: and the people sought him, and came unto him, and stayed him, that he should not depart from them."

(Luke 5:16) "And he withdrew himself into the

wilderness, and prayed."

A key observation is that Jesus chose early morning prayer in solitary places as a regular habit.

The lesson for us is that nothing should replace private communion with God, because busyness is often the thief of precious moments. If you are too busy to pray, you are truly too busy. Martha was too busy for God: "Now it came to pass, as they went, that he entered into a certain village: and a certain woman named Martha received him into her house. *39]* And she had a sister called Mary, which also sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word. *40]* But Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost

thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. *41]* And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: *42]* But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her" (Luke 10:38-42).

Chapter III. Jesus Prayed Before Choosing the Twelve Apostles

Scripture Reference

(Luke 6:12-13) "And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God. *13]* And when it was day, he called *unto him* his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles;"

Note: "He continued all night in prayer to God."

The significance to us is that major leadership decisions were preceded by prayer.

The lesson for us is that

important decisions require seeking God's wisdom.

(Ecclesiastes 7:25) "I applied mine heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason *of things*, and to know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness *and* madness:"

(James 1:5) "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."

(James 3:13, 17) "Who *is* a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. ... *17]* But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then

peaceable, gentle, *and* easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy."

Chapter IV. Jesus Prayed Before Feeding the Five Thousand

Scripture References

(Matthew 14:19) "And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed, and brake, and gave the loaves to *his* disciples, and the disciples to the multitude."

(Mark 6:41) "And when he had taken the five loaves and the two fishes, he looked up to heaven, and blessed, and brake the loaves, and gave *them* to his disciples to set before them; and the two fishes divided he among them all."

(Luke 9:16) "Then he took the five loaves and the two fishes, and looking up to heaven, he blessed them, and brake, and gave to the disciples to set before the multitude."

(John 6:11) "And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would."

Our observation is that Jesus gave thanks before multiplying the bread.

The lesson for us is that gratitude precedes God's provision. The order is: ask, express gratitude and then

recieve.

A certain farmer was asked to dine with a gentleman. The farmer, according to his custom, gave thanks to God. Whereupon his host jeered him, "That is old-fashioned; it is not customary nowadays for well-educated people to pray at the table."

The farmer stated that it was customary with him but not with some members of his household.

"Oh, then," said the gentleman, "they are sensible and enlightened. Who are they?"

"They are my pigs," answered the farmer.

In 1741 John Cennick wrote, " Be present at our table, Lord;

Be here and everywhere adored;
Thy creatures bless, and grant
that we May feast in paradise
with Thee".

Chapter V. Jesus Prayed After Feeding the Five Thousand

Scripture Reference

(Matthew 14:23) "And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone."

Jesus dismissed the crowds and went up the mountain alone.

The lessons for us is that public success is to be followed by private prayer.

Chapter VI. Jesus Prayed Before Walking on Water

Scripture Reference

(Matthew 14:23-25) "And when he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into a mountain apart to pray: and when the evening was come, he was there alone. *24]* But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves: for the wind was contrary. *25]* And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea."

His prayer preceded one of His great and notable miracles.

The lesson: A violinist puts his or her instrument in tune before the concert commences; likewise you and I need to put

ourselves in tune with God
before the day commences,

Chapter VII. Jesus Prayed Before Peter's Confession

Scripture Reference

(Luke 9:18) "And it came to pass, as he was alone praying, his disciples were with him: and he asked them, saying, Whom say the people that I am?"

While praying alone, Jesus asked, "Who do the crowds say that I am?" And Peter confessed Him as the Christ.

Lessons:

1) You don't have to be on your own to pray alone. We can pray anywhere, anytime, even in a crowd.

2) With Jesus we are never alone.

Chapter VIII. Jesus Prayed at the Transfiguration

Scripture Reference

(Luke 9:28-35) "And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, he took Peter and John and James, and went up into a mountain to pray. *29]* And as he prayed, the fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment *was* white *and* glistering. *30]* And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias: *31]* Who appeared in glory, and spake of his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem. *32]* But Peter and they that were with him were heavy with sleep: and when

they were awake, they saw his glory, and the two men that stood with him. *33]* And it came to pass, as they departed from him, Peter said unto Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here: and let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias: not knowing what he said. *34]* While he thus spake, there came a cloud, and overshadowed them: and they feared as they entered into the cloud. *35]* And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him."

Jesus took Peter, James, and John to pray. While praying, His face change, His clothes became dazzling white, Moses and Elijah

appeared and the Father's voice spoke, "This is my beloved Son: hear him."

The lessons for us

1) Prayer precedes divine revelation.

2) Our Heavenly Father has instructed us to listen to what Jesus has to say.

Chapter IX. Jesus Taught the Lord's Prayer

Scripture References

(Matthew 6:5-15) "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites *are:* for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. *6]* But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. *7]* But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen *do:* for they think

that they shall be heard for their much speaking. *8]* Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. *9]* After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. *10]* Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in heaven. *11]* Give us this day our daily bread. *12]* And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. *13]* And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen. *14]* For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: *15]* But if ye forgive not men

their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

(Luke 11:1-4) "And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. *2]* And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. *3]* Give us day by day our daily bread. *4]* And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us

from evil."

The "Lord's Prayer was spoken as part of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7) and what appears to be another occasion, His disciples asked, "Lord, teach us to pray."

The prayer, " Our Father which art in heaven (etc.)" contains all the major themes: of worship, God's kingdom, daily provision, forgiveness, guidance, protection and deliverance.

The lessons for us is that Jesus teaches us a pattern of prayer, not merely specific words to recite.

Chapter X. Jesus Gave Thanks Before Raising Lazarus

Scripture References

Specifically (John 11:41-42) "Then they took away the stone *from the place* where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up *his* eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. *42]* And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said *it,* that they may believe that thou hast sent me."

The context (John 11:11-45) "... Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. *12]* Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well.

13] Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. *14]* Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead. *15]* And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe; nevertheless let us go unto him. *16]* Then said Thomas, which is called Didymus, unto his fellowdisciples, Let us also go, that we may die with him. *17]* Then when Jesus came, he found that he had *lain* in the grave four days already. *18]* Now Bethany was nigh unto Jerusalem, about fifteen furlongs off: *19]* And many of the Jews came to Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. *20]* Then

Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met him: but Mary sat *still* in the house. *21]* Then said Martha unto Jesus, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. *22]* But I know, that even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give *it* thee. *23]* Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. *24]* Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. *25]* Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: *26]* And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believest thou this? *27]*

She saith unto him, Yea, Lord: I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of God, which should come into the world. *28]* And when she had so said, she went her way, and called Mary her sister secretly, saying, The Master is come, and calleth for thee. *29]* As soon as she heard *that,* she arose quickly, and came unto him. *30]* Now Jesus was not yet come into the town, but was in that place where Martha met him. *31]* The Jews then which were with her in the house, and comforted her, when they saw Mary, that she rose up hastily and went out, followed her, saying, She goeth unto the grave to weep there. *32]* Then when Mary was come where Jesus was,

and saw him, she fell down at his feet, saying unto him, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. *33]* When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, he groaned in the spirit, and was troubled, *34]* And said, Where have ye laid him? They said unto him, Lord, come and see. *35]* Jesus wept. *36]* Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him! *37]* And some of them said, Could not this man, which opened the eyes of the blind, have caused that even this man should not have died? *38]* Jesus therefore again groaning in himself cometh to the grave. It was a cave, and a stone lay upon it.

39] Jesus said, Take ye away the stone. Martha, the sister of him that was dead, saith unto him, Lord, by this time he stinketh: for he hath been *dead* four days. *40]* Jesus saith unto her, Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God? *41]* Then they took away the stone *from the place* where the dead was laid. And Jesus lifted up *his* eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. *42]* And I knew that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said *it,* that they may believe that thou hast sent me. *43]* And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus,

come forth. *44]* And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go. *45]* Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him."

The prayer, *"Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me"* was not just Jesus expressing gratitude, but verbalised to strengthen the faith of those listening and watching.

The lessons for us are:

1) Confidence in answered prayer comes through relationship with the Father.

2) Pray first, then act.

3) Rather than wait and pray when finally there is nothing else we can do, Jesus invites us to pray before we do anything.

Chapter XI. Jesus Prayed During Passion Week

Scripture Reference

(John 12:27-28) "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. *28]* Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, *saying,* I have both glorified *it,* and will glorify *it* again."

Jesus' prayer focus was, "Father, glorify Thy name", to which the Father answered audibly from heaven.

The lesson for us is than although our prayers may include petitions, intercession and confession, the supreme

purpose of prayer is God's glory.

(See also Chapter XIII. Jesus Prayed in Gethsemane)

Chapter XII. Jesus' High Priestly Prayer

This designation of John 17 (The Prayer of the High Priest) was first made by a German Lutheran theologian and disciple of Philip Melancthon, David Chytraeus (or Chyträus (1530 –1600).

"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are, yet* without sin" (Hebrews 4:15).

Scripture Reference

(John 17) "These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come;

glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: *2]* As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. *3]* And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. *4]* I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. *5]* And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. *6]* I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. *7]* Now they have

known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. *8]* For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received *them,* and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. *9]* I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. *10]* And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. *11]* And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we *are.* *12]* While I was with them in

the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. *13]* And now come I to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves. *14]* I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. *15]* I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil. *16]* They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. *17]* Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. *18]*

As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. *19]* And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. *20]* Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; *21]* That they all may be one; as thou, Father, *art* in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. *22]* And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: *23]* I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved

them, as thou hast loved me. *24]* Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. *25]* O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee: but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. *26]* And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare *it:* that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them."

This is the longest recorded prayer of Jesus.

Part One (John 17:1–5)

Jesus prays for Himself.

Main request: "Father, glorify Thy Son."

Purpose: So the Son may glorify the Father .

Lesson for us: our glorifying God is evidence of our relationship to Him.

Michelangelo wrote, "Lord, make me see your glory in every place".

Part Two (John 17:6–19)

Jesus prays for His disciples.

Requests: To keep them, protect them, sanctify them, fill them with joy and send them into the world.

Part Three (John 17:20–26)

Jesus prays for future believers, and that includes you and me today.

His major requests are for unity, love, glory and eternal fellowship.

This chapter is often called Jesus' **High Priestly Prayer** because, like an High Priest, He intercedes for His people.

Lesson for us: "Behold, how good and how pleasant *it is* for brethren to dwell together in unity!" (Psalm 133:1).

The state emblem of Kentucky shows two men facing each other shaking hands. The motto beneath reads: *"United we stand, divided we fall."*

Chapter XIII. Jesus Prayed in Gethsemane

Scripture References

(Matthew 26:36-46) "Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. *37]* And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. *38]* Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. *39]* And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless

not as I will, but as thou *wilt. 40]* And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? *41]* Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak. *42]* He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. *43]* And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy. *44]* And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words. *45]* Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now,

and take *your* rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. *46]* Rise, let us be going: behold, he is at hand that doth betray me."

(Mark 14:32-42) "And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane: and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray. *33]* And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy; *34]* And saith unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful unto death: tarry ye here, and watch. *35]* And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour

might pass from him. *36]* And he said, Abba, Father, all things *are* possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt. *37]* And he cometh, and findeth them sleeping, and saith unto Peter, Simon, sleepest thou? couldest not thou watch one hour? *38]* Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation. The spirit truly *is* ready, but the flesh *is* weak. *39]* And again he went away, and prayed, and spake the same words. *40]* And when he returned, he found them asleep again, (for their eyes were heavy,) neither wist they what to answer him. *41]* And he cometh the third time, and saith unto them, Sleep on

now, and take *your* rest: it is enough, the hour is come; behold, the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. *42]* Rise up, let us go; lo, he that betrayeth me is at hand."

(Luke 22:39-46) "And he came out, and went, as he was wont, to the mount of Olives; and his disciples also followed him. *40]* And when he was at the place, he said unto them, Pray that ye enter not into temptation. *41]* And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed, *42]* Saying, Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done. *43]* And there appeared

an angel unto him from heaven, strengthening him. *44]* And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. *45]* And when he rose up from prayer, and was come to his disciples, he found them sleeping for sorrow, *46]* And said unto them, Why sleep ye? rise and pray, lest ye enter into temptation."

The recorded prayer is, *"Abba, Father, all things are possible unto thee; take away this cup from me: nevertheless not what I will, but what thou wilt"* Mark 14:36.

Dr Luke, an observant physician, records: "his sweat was as it were great drops of

blood falling down to the ground (Luke 22:44).

The major themes of this prayer are submission, obedience, perseverance and being honest before God.

Lesson: I suggest that this may be the greatest example of surrender and submission in prayer.

Chapter XIV. Jesus Prayed on the Cross

Jesus spoke seven 'sayings' from the cross; three of these 'sayings' are direct prayers to God the Father.

1. The First Prayer

> (Luke 23:34) "Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots."

The theme is forgiveness.

Epictetus said, *"Venia ultione praestantior est. Venia mitis ingenii indicium est; ultio feri ingenii"* (Forgiveness is better than revenge. Forgiveness is the sign of a gentle nature; revenge is the sign of a savage nature).

2. The Second Prayer

(Matthew 27:46) "And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

(Mark 15:34) "And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

This was a quotation from Psalm 22 expressing the depth of His suffering: *" My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? why art thou so far from helping me, and from the words of my roaring?"* (Psalm 22:1).

The theme of this prayer is that although bearing the weight of humanity's sin, Jesus still remained faithful in addressing God.

The lessons for us are

1) No matter low our circumstances, we can still cry out to God, and

2) It is perfectly okay to ask God "Why?".

3. Third Prayer

> (Luke 23:46) "And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost."

This was a quotation from Psalm 31:5, *"Into thine hand I*

commit my spirit....”

The theme of this prayer is complete trust in Father God.

The lesson for us is that Jesus firmly believed that God receives the breath (spirit) of those who die for Him, and we can believe it too.

Chapter XV. Jesus Blessed the Bread at the Last Supper

Just as we take photographs to help us remember, communion is a time to help us keep the memory of Jesus fresh in our minds and be grateful.

Scripture References

(Matthew 26:26-27) "And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed *it,* and brake *it,* and gave *it* to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. *27]* And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave *it* to them, saying, Drink ye all of it;"

(Mark 14:22-23) "And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and

brake *it,* and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: this is my body. *23]* And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave *it* to them: and they all drank of it."

(Luke 22:17-19) "And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide *it* among yourselves: *18]* For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come. *19]* And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake *it,* and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me."

Jesus gave thanks before instituting the memorial of communion.

The lessons for us:

1) On the very night of the greatest betrayal in history, Jesus, knowing what would transpire over the next few hours, was still able to express gratitude for simple things: bread and wine.

The Quaker John Greenleaf Whittier wrote, ""No longer forward nor behind, I look in hope and fear; But grateful, take the good I find, the best of now and here."

2) When we are facing a frightening scenario of betrayal or rejection we can choose whether to be grateful or hateful.

Chapter XVI. Jesus Blessed the Bread at Emmaus

Scripture Reference

(Luke 24:13-33) "And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem *about* threescore furlongs. *14]* And they talked together of all these things which had happened. *15]* And it came to pass, that, while they communed *together* and reasoned, Jesus himself drew near, and went with them. *16]* But their eyes were holden that they should not know him. *17]* And he said unto them, What manner of communications *are* these that ye have one to another,

as ye walk, and are sad? *18]* And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answering said unto him, Art thou only a stranger in Jerusalem, and hast not known the things which are come to pass there in these days? *19]* And he said unto them, What things? And they said unto him, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, which was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: *20]* And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him. *21]* But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, to day is the third day since these things were

done. *22]* Yea, and certain women also of our company made us astonished, which were early at the sepulchre; *23]* And when they found not his body, they came, saying, that they had also seen a vision of angels, which said that he was alive. *24]* And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulchre, and found *it* even so as the women had said: but him they saw not. *25]* Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: *26]* Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? *27]* And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things

concerning himself. *28]* And they drew nigh unto the village, whither they went: and he made as though he would have gone further. *29]* But they constrained him, saying, Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent. And he went in to tarry with them. *30]* And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed *it,* and brake, and gave to them. *31]* And their eyes were opened, and they knew him; and he vanished out of their sight. *32]* And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures? *33]* And they rose up the same hour, and

returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them,"

Key verse: (Luke 24:30) *"And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them."*

The lesson for us is that when Jesus blessed the bread and the disciples recognized Him, it is because Christ is revealed through thanksgiving and fellowship.

In our fellowship with others may we both be thankful and reveal Jesus to those around us.

Chapter XVII. Jesus Blessed His Disciples Before His Ascension

Scripture Reference

(Luke 24:50-53) "And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. *51]* And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. *52]* And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: *53]* And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen."

Jesus' earthly ministry began with a blessing with the Father blessing the Son (Matthew 3:17) and when Jesus lifted His

hands and blessed His disciples we note that **His earthly ministry concluded with blessing**.

The lesson I ask myself is, "How can I be a blessing to others, because I have been blessed solely for that purpose.

God doesn't simply bless us make us blessed but in order for us to be a blessing to others.

Appendix: Summary of Jesus' Recorded Prayers

1. Baptism Luke 3:21–22

2. Solitary prayer Mark 1:35; Luke 5:16

3. Choosing the Twelve Luke 6:12

4. Feeding the 5,000 Matthew 14:19; Mark 6:41; Luke 9:16; John 6:11

5. After feeding the 5,000 Matthew 14:23

6. Before Peter's confession Luke 9:18

7. Transfiguration Luke 9:28–29

8. Teaching the Lord's Prayer Matthew 6:9–13; Luke 11:2–4

9. Raising LazarusJohn 11:41–42

10. Holy Week prayer John 12:27–28

11. High Priestly Prayer John 17

12. Gethsemane Matthew 26:39–44; Mark 14:35–39; Luke 22:41–44

13. First prayer from the cross Luke 23:34

14. Cry from the cross Matthew 27:46; Mark 15:34

15. Final prayer from the cross Luke 23:46

16. Last Supper thanksgiving Matthew 26:26–27; Mark 14:22–23; Luke 22:17–19

17. Emmaus blessing Luke

24:30

18. Ascension blessing Luke 24:50–51

Conclusion

The prayers of Jesus reveal a life of constant communion with the Father. He prayed before major decisions, times of success, in moments of grief, before miracles, for his disciples, for future believers, in suffering and at His death.

Several recurring themes emerge:

1) Dependence: Jesus consistently sought the Father's will rather than acting independently.

2) Thanksgiving: He regularly gave thanks before acts of provision and fellowship.

3) Intercession: He prayed not only for Himself but also for His disciples and all who would

believe.

4) Submission: In Gethsemane, He modelled perfect obedience even in deep anguish.

5) Trust: His final words committed His breath into the Father's hands.

These prayers provide both a window into Jesus' relationship with the Father and a model for Christian prayer, one marked by worship, gratitude, obedience, compassion, perseverance, and confidence in God's purposes.

Squire Boone, younger brother of Daniel Boone, was wounded in battles with Indians eleven times. Finally he settled near Corydon, Indiana, where he built a mill. On one of the foundations he carved these

words:

"My God my life hath much befriended.

I'll praise Him till my days are ended."

Afterword

It was at a Child Evangelism Fellowship *Good News Club* hosted by Mr. and Mrs. Bell in King Street, Christchurch that, at a young age, I developed an immense love for the Holy Bible and I accepted Christ as my Saviour.

> One of the choruses that we sing is, *"Read your Bible, grow every day, Read your Bible, grow every day, Read your Bible, grow every day, And you'll grow, grow, grow"* (author Anonymous).

Mrs. Bell also encouraged me to memorise passages of the Bible, starting with selected verses from the little children's Bible that they gave me (that I have since worn out, and I'm now

using our large one-hundred-year-old Family Bible).

I would encourage the reader also not only to read the Bible, to memorise it (I started with the Psalm 23), but also to actually study it, using tools such as a concordance and a dictionary (available in a public library or from a good bookstore).

Whatever your age, do this and you will "grow, grow, grow" like Jesus Who " ... increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man" (Luke 2:52).

— Lionel D C Hartley, 1970